

# **Street Naming and Numbering Policy**

## **Summary**

The naming and numbering of streets and buildings is a statutory function that Bromsgrove District Council provides in exercise of its powers and duties under the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 and the Public Health Act 1925. The purpose of this control is to make sure that any new street names and building names and numbers are allocated logically with a view to ensuring, amongst other things, the effective delivery of mail and that emergency service vehicles are able to locate any address to which they may be summoned.

Anyone Wishing to change the name or number of their property or seeking an address for a new property should complete our online application form.  
[Street naming and numbering - bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://bromsgrove.gov.uk)

As far as street naming proposals are concerned, we are happy for developers or owners to propose their own preferred names for consideration. However, it is recommended that more than one suggestion for a new name be put forward in case the initial one fails to meet the criteria. It is desirable that any suggested road name should have some connection with the area concerned.

If proposals comply with our Policy on Street Naming and Numbering and, for street names, do not meet with an objection from the Council, the local Parish Council (when appropriate) or the Royal Mail Address Development Centre, the new address will be formally allocated and all relevant bodies will be notified.

Where street names or previous numbers have been established without reference to Bromsgrove District Council, we have the authority to issue Renaming or Renumbering Orders, under section 64 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act.

To aid the emergency services, we will ensure that where appropriate, if a street has a name and has street signs relating to that name, all properties accessed off of it will be officially addressed to include that street name.

## **The Council Commitments**

- To treat everyone in a fair and equal manner in line with the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- To deliver value and to place the customer first.
- To meet our statutory duties with regards to Street Naming and Numbering

# **Street Naming & Numbering – Statutory Function**

## **General Information**

Street naming and numbering is a statutory function of local authorities. The powers for this function are contained in the following Acts:

- Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, ss 64 and 65; and
- Public Health Act 1925, ss 17, 18 and 19

The departmental responsibility is different within each local authority. Some of the departments who may do the work are:

- Building Control;
- Planning
- Highways and Transportation; and
- Engineers

## **Legislative requirements**

The primary legislation (Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, s 64), ensures that local authorities shall cause houses, and buildings in all or any street to be marked with numbers as they think fit. The street name also has to be displayed. It also gives the local authority the power to prosecute anyone who destroys, pulls down, or defaces those signs, numbers and names or anyone who puts up a different name or number to that which was approved. The penalty in a successful prosecution is a fine as determined by Magistrates.

The Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847s 65 tells occupiers of houses and other buildings to mark their buildings with numbers (as approved) and renew them as often as they become obliterated or defaced. The local authority has the power under this section to prosecute anyone who fails to do this, they may also carry out the work and recover the money from the occupier. The penalty in a successful prosecution is a fine at level 1 on the standard scale.

The Public Health Act 1925 built upon the primary legislation recognising the growth of urban populations and authorities and the need to work with various public bodies with vested interests in street naming and numbering as well as the need to consult and involve affected owners and occupiers.

The Public Health Act 1925, s 17 made it clear that the urban authority should be notified of proposed street names. The authority could then object within one month in writing. The reason for objections could be that those names already exist, but this power was very important because it allowed the authority more control over the process.

It also prohibits the setting up in any street the name, until after one month's notice to the local authority, or until any objection by the urban authority has been removed or overruled on appeal. The penalty for contravening this is a fine as determined by Magistrates.

The Public Health Act 1925, s 18 gave the power to urban authorities to alter the street name or any part of a street, and assign a street name or part of a street where a name has not been given. The authority must give one month's notice before making an order and it must be posted at each end of the street or that part affected. The notice must set out details of where to appeal to if any person is aggrieved. Appeal is to a petty sessional court (Magistrates' Court) within 21 days.

The Public Health Act 1925, s 19 gives authorities the power to insist that the name of every street shall be shown in a conspicuous position and also alter or renew it if it becomes illegible. This section makes it illegal to pull down a street name which has been lawfully set up or fix a notice or advertisement within close proximity to the sign. Anyone found guilty of infringing these requirements is liable to a fine imposed by Magistrates.

The legislation give the boroughs the ability to make Regulations about erecting the names of public streets and ensuring that the names and numbers of buildings are displayed by owners in accordance with those regulations.

## **Byelaws**

Local authorities have powers to make regulations and do so in relation to street naming and numbering.

It is incumbent upon the local authority to consult with interested parties such as parish councils, fire authorities, police authorities and the Royal Mail / Post Office.

Adjacent groups of local authorities sometimes work together to ensure a consistent approach in order to assist developers and owners of buildings.

## **Postcodes**

Within this process the local authorities are **not** responsible for postcodes – these are only allocated by the Royal Mail after notification by the Authority. The postcode enquiry line is 08456 045060, or you may e-mail them at [addressdevelopment@royalmail.com](mailto:addressdevelopment@royalmail.com)

Definition of "Street" shall extend to and include any road, square, court, alley and thoroughfare within the limits of the Towns Improvements Clauses Act 1847 or relates to any thoroughfare which when named will be included in an official postal address. In all such instances we will consult with Royal Mail, and the Emergency Services of suitability.

## **S.3 Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847**

Note: The above definition does not distinguish between adopted and un-adopted roads.

The law relating to the naming of streets and numbering of houses is found in various statutes; the power of local authorities will depend upon whether or not particular provisions have been adopted.

## **Public Health Act 1925**

### Section 17 (adoptive provision)

Notice of intended street name should be sent to the authority who within one month (21 days) may object in writing to the proposed name.

If objection notice served the person proposing the name may appeal within 21 days to a petty sessional court.

### Section 19 (adoptive provision)

The authority shall cause the name of every street to be painted in a conspicuous position on any house, building or erection in or near the street.

Where the provisions of Sections 17 and 19 of the Public Health Act 1925 are not in force the relevant rules are found in the: Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 Section 64

This empowers the authority to give a name to a street which is not already named. It is also the duty of the authority to cause to be put up or painted the numbers to the houses as they think fit. It does not empower them to change or alter the name of a street.

## **Public Health Act 1925**

### Section 18 (adoptive provision)

The authority by order may alter the name of any street or part of or may assign a new street name.

Not less than one month before a street is given a name the authority shall cause notice of the intended order to be posted at each end of the street.

Notice should contain statement that appeal may be lodged within 21 days to petty sessional court by any person aggrieved.

Where Section 18 of the Public Health Act 1925 is not in force the provisions of:

## **The Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907 (S.21)**

### Section 21

The local authority may alter the street name with the consent of two thirds in number of the ratepayers in the street.

Note: Section 21 is not of general application

### **Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847**

Section 64:

The Council can initiate to be put up or painted the number(s) to the house(s), as it thinks fit.

Section 65:

The occupiers of houses and other buildings in streets must mark them with such numbers as the authority approve and they must renew them whenever necessary. If an occupier fails to do this within a week from notice from the authority he is liable on conviction to a penalty.

In the event of an appeal against either Councils decision(s) then details should be sent to:-

Local Government Ombudsman  
The Oaks No 2  
Westwood Way  
Westwood Business Park  
Coventry CV4 8JB  
Phone: 024 7682 0000  
Fax: 024 7682 0001

For further information go to [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

Power to charge under Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003

The Council is not permitted to charge for street naming services (since the duty to provide this service is not discretionary), but it can charge for the numbering of houses and other buildings (which is a discretionary service) by virtue of section 64 and 65 of the 1847 Act coupled with section 93 of the Local Government 2003 Act.

## Specific Policy Areas

### Naming Streets and Numbering - Houses

Section 64 of The Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 requires Councils to ensure houses and buildings are “marked with numbers as they think fit”. We also have a responsibility to make sure that the street names are displayed. Should any person destroy, deface or put up another number or name other than the official one, then that person shall be liable to a fine of up to £200 under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 for every such offence.

While Bromsgrove District Council is the authority for naming streets, in practice authority is delegated to Officers of the joint Street Naming and Numbering Team, in consultation with relevant Members, and with reference to the approved policy and approved list of ‘candidate’ street names.

Property developers may also suggest names for new streets. These too will be received by us and checked against our criteria (see following section).

In the case of a Parish Council, the Borough Council will give priority to and follow any suggestion of the Parish Council as long as it meets the approved naming criteria. In cases where the Parish Council suggestion does not meet the criteria a final decision will be made by the Executive Director - Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory & Housing Services in conjunction with the Head of Business Transformation.

All costs for the erection of signs for new streets will be borne by the property developer. There is a recommended specification for the signs and their preferred locations for general street signage, for those that fall within the designated Bromsgrove Town Centre, will be of the same specification of those used within the Bromsgrove Conservation Area. The Council must be contacted for advice before both ordering and erection of such signs.

Maintenance of street signs becomes the Council’s responsibility once a street has been adopted.

It is unlawful to erect a street nameplate or a property nameplate until the said name has been confirmed in writing by Bromsgrove District Council.

**Note:** Contravention of the above attracts a fine of up to £200 under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 (Section 37(2) Standard Scale Level 1 offences). There is also a daily penalty not exceeding £1.

# Criteria for naming streets (residential and industrial)

## General Information

The Council will use these guidelines when agreeing a new number or address. Developers and individuals should follow these guidelines for any suggested street names:

New street names should try to avoid duplicating any similar name already in use in a town/village or in the same postcode area.

A variation in the terminal word, for example, "street", "road", "avenue", will not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a name.

A common request is to repeat existing names in a new road or building title (for example a request for "St Mary's Close" off an existing St Mary's Way, near St Mary's Church) This is not acceptable as it can have a detrimental effect in an emergency situation.

This is in line with Government guidance found in **Department of Transport Circular No Roads 3/93**.

In general the following guidelines should be adhered to:-

1. Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell, in general, words of more than three syllables should be avoided.
2. Avoid aesthetically unsuitable names such as Gasworks Road, Tip House, Coalpit Lane, or names capable of deliberate misinterpretation like Hoare Road, Typple Avenue, etc.
3. A new street or building name should not begin with 'The'.
4. Subsidiary names (i.e. a row of buildings within an already named road being called '.....Terrace') should not be used.
5. The Council(s) will not adopt any unofficial 'marketing' titles used by developers in the sale of new properties.

Owing to the former status of Bromsgrove as a "New Town", a particular hierarchy has been established to help designate street naming and this must be adhered to as follows below:-

## Hierarchy of Street Designations in Bromsgrove District Council

The Council's duty is to ensure that the streets can be identified clearly for strangers to the Borough, to enable deliveries of mail and other items to be carried out in an efficient manner and emergency services to reach specific points in the town without delay from confusion.

The name of a street is intended to convey its status in the road hierarchy. In the case of roads in classes (iii), (iv) and (v) of the Road Hierarchy it is also intended to provide a guide (by use of an alphabetical sequence of initial letters) as to where it lies in relation to other roads of the same status opening off the same major road.

The hierarchy is established principally to maintain the consistency which was applied in New Town Developments across the whole of the Borough. It may not need to apply rigidly in older areas of the town, or in rural areas, such as , where appropriate local variations are permitted.

The road hierarchy contains six levels. These are:

(i) Primary Roads

These serve as the main route for all heavy traffic flows. They are named "..... **Highway**", after the town to which they lead. All have now been named.

(ii) District Distributors

These serve as the main routes in and out of the town's districts. They normally have no frontage development on them, and carry little or no through traffic though they may carry some cross-town traffic. They are named "..... **Drive**", usually after some part of the district that they serve.

(iii) Local Distributors

These serve as the accesses to areas of housing, often comprising several different estates. They connect at one end into District Distributors. They are often cul-de-sacs, but they do not have houses fronting onto them except at their upper ends and also in some cases, where the architect, designing the layout of one of the housing developments, has departed from the usual principles. They are named "..... **Lane**", and the name is taken from the local tithe map. So far as possible, the initial letters of the names for Local Distributors opening off a District Distributor are taken in alphabetical sequence from one of its ends, so that drivers knowing the principle but not knowing the area can know which way to drive along the District Distributor to find the Local Distributor turn out that they want.



iv) Housing Access Roads

These are minor roads, almost invariably cul-de-sacs, serving individual developments or parts of individual developments. They connect directly onto a Local Distributor, not onto another Housing Access Road except in exceptional circumstances. They are called "..... **Close**", and the names are taken from a list compiled from a list of parish names for this and other areas in the country. The names are chosen so that the initial letters of the roads that open off an individual Local Distributor with the District Distributor, but not necessarily starting with "A".

(v) Industrial Access Roads

These serve as Local Distributors and also as Access Roads, in industrial areas. They are named from the Tithe Map, and are all called "..... **Road**".

(vi) Public Transport Routes

These are specialised roads serving buses with, in some cases, an element of general traffic going to a district centre. They are named "..... **Way**", using names related to the district that they pass through. All have been named.

(vii) Hierarchy

Note that as a general rule each road connects, as its main connection, into a road further up the hierarchy. Closes connect directly into Lanes, and Lanes connect directly into Drives, so far as possible, no Close connects (as its main access) into another Close. Sometimes the layout chosen by the architect makes it difficult to follow this naming policy without causing trouble for street numbering, and this point has to be considered when the naming arrangements for an estate are being worked out.

BROMSGROVE SUMMARY

Primary Roads	-	Highway
District Distributors	-	Drive
Local Distributors	-	Lane
Housing access Roads	-	Close (Mews or Gardens in addition, in appropriate cases, where numbering cannot be altered; or Road where this mirrors the existing naming scheme – mainly in older parts of the town)
Industrial access Roads	-	Road
Public Transport Routes	-	Way

In addition we also have:

Town Centre roads - Street  
T C Pedestrian precincts - Walk, Square.

Residential cul-de-sacs normally take the name of a parish from other counties.

Any new development where there is a strong, identifiable local naming scheme, such as in Batchley or Vaynor, would take the name of a tree or poet in keeping with tradition.

For Distributor roads and roads serving industrial development, names taken from the tithe map or districts rather than parishes are preferred.

Town Centre roads and walkways are taken from streets now removed by redevelopment. (Skinner Street is possibly the last remaining name available for use).

## **The Council's criteria for assigning a new Postal Address**

After receiving a request for an address for property / properties which currently have not been addressed, the Council will first check for approved planning permission. If this has been granted then they will start the process of creating a new address.

### **If the dwelling/industrial unit does not have Planning Permission**

The Council will start the addressing process, providing the properties have been successfully assessed for Council Tax or National Non-Domestic Rates and as long as these properties have a secure mail delivery point.

The Council will not give a **number** to properties without it having the relevant planning permissions. Only dwelling names will be accepted in these circumstances, providing they meet the criteria set out. If an applicant fails to provide an acceptable dwelling name to a non-permitted development then a descriptive name will be issued. Such names can be changed later by the applicant following the standard procedure. The reasoning behind this is to ensure the numbering sequence of any street is not disrupted by additional properties which have not gained proper planning permission and therefore are likely to be subject to enforcement action, which may result in removal by demolition.

*Issuing an address to properties without planning permission will have no bearing on planning matters or be capable of being used in support of any planning appeals.*

Under no circumstances will either Authority grant an official address without either planning permission or an assessment for council tax being in place. This includes agricultural and other lands. This conforms to Royal Mail policy and guidelines used for postcode allocation.

### **Providing Postcodes**

When an approved address is agreed by all parties, Royal Mail will confirm a Postcode. The maintenance and any future changes to this Postcode are The Royal Mail's responsibility and not subject to any involvement by the Council.

### **Address Locality**

Localities within the official postal address are the responsibility of Royal Mail. Where applicants object to a locality name in their postal address, the Council's Street Name and Numbering team will advise them to consult Royal Mail, who have a procedure laid down in their code of practice by the Postal Services Commission for adding or amending locality details.

***The Council does however remind applicants that postal addresses are not geographically accurate descriptions, but routing instructions for Royal Mail staff and they can and do contain names for villages, towns and cities that can be several miles away.***

### **General Guidelines for numbering buildings**

- A new street should be numbered with even numbers on one side and odd numbers on the other except that, for a cul-de-sac, consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction is preferred.
- Private garages and similar buildings used for housing cars and similar will not be numbered.
- A proper sequence shall be maintained, with the number 13 not normally being omitted unless specifically requested. And once numbered we will not normally re-number properties. We will only renumber a property where there can be shown to be consistent delivery problems.
  - Buildings (including those on corner sites) are numbered according to the street in which the **main entrance** is to be found.
  - If a multiple occupancy building has entrances in more than one street, then each entrance can be numbered in the appropriate road if required.
- In residential buildings (e.g., blocks of flats) it is usual to give a street number to each dwelling where the block is up to six storeys in height. When the block exceeds this height or there are not sufficient numbers available because of existing development, it should be given a name and numbered separately internally. Such names will be treated in the same way as house names.
  - All new block names should ideally end with one of the following suffixes:
    - House
    - Court – residential and office block only.
    - Point – high block residential only.
    - Tower – high block offices or residential.
- The Council will use numbers followed by letters only where there is no alternative. For example these are needed when one large house in a road is demolished and replaced by a number of smaller houses. To include the new houses in the numbered road sequence would involve renumbering all the higher numbered houses on that side of the road. To avoid this each new house should be given the number of the old house with either A, B, C or D added. Letters will also be used if the new development were to lie prior

to the numbering scheme commencing.

For example, if 4 houses were built prior to the first property number 2. The new dwellings would become 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D. This is to aid emergency service response and mail delivery.

We will endeavour to avoid using suffixes to numbers wherever possible. For new developments where additional properties have been requested after initial numbering we will renumber the entire street. ***If the developers request this, once occupancy has started to take place, they (the developer) will be liable for compensating the occupiers for any charges levied on them (the occupier) with regards to changing their address.***

- For private houses in existing unnumbered roads it is essential that the houses are officially allocated names, which are registered with the emergency services. Anyone wishing to change the name of their unnumbered house must apply to have the property registered with the change.

Where a property has a number, it must be used and displayed.

Where a name has been given to a property which also has an official number, the number must always be included in any correspondence. The name cannot be regarded as an alternative.

*This is enforceable under section 65 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847. The Council does not need to be informed of name changes to properties that have official numbering. However if a name is provided the authority will store the property name as data on our systems as an alias reference only.*

This applies both to domestic and commercial property. This is to ensure consistency of records over time, reduce costs and aid delivery of mail and emergency service response.

- The Council will enforce numbering of properties without numbers, for example in streets where all properties have names or those where numbers are not being displayed.

In addition to these guidelines developers and building owners should be aware that planning permission maybe required in the following instances when adding a physical address to a building:

- Listed buildings: if the proposed name/number display would affect the special character of the building.

Even relatively small-scale displays or alterations may require listed building consent.

It is also possible that a nameplate attached to a listed building could be regarded as an advertisement and the following condition maybe applied.

- Advertisement Control: it is possible that a display may be deemed to be a sign requiring consent under the Town and Country Planning (control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.

## **Allocation of Postal Addresses to New Developments (individual & multiple)**

The property developer should not give any postal addresses, whether implied or by using development names, including a postcode, to potential occupiers, either directly or indirectly (for example via solicitors or estate agents) before formal approval has been ratified and issued by Bromsgrove District Council, the Authority will not be liable for any costs or damages caused by failure to comply with this.

Applicants must contact Bromsgrove District Council prior to a formal application in order to get advice and guidance on our naming / numbering policy and the positioning of nameplates.

The applicant or developer may suggest a possible name or names for any new street(s). Several suggestions for names can be made in case the Council, Royal Mail or members of the public make an objection.

Initial approval for street names will be sought from Royal Mail. If Royal Mail objects to a name an alternative will need to be suggested.

If within a Parish, the proposed street names are then forwarded to the Parish Council for their approval. The Parish Council can at this stage object and suggest its own names that conform to the Council's and Royal Mail policies. However there will be a time limit of 30 days to object and suggest new names.

While we are the authority for naming streets, in practice we will follow any recommendation of the Parish Council, as long as it meets the naming criteria.

Where the Council cannot agree, final approval of street names will be given by the Executive Director - Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory & Housing Services in conjunction with the Head of Business Transformation.

The developer will cover the initial costs of ordering and sighting of the street nameplates. The Council will cover maintenance costs once the street has been officially adopted.

Numbering of the new street(s) will be carried out following the guidelines within this policy. All properties on newly named streets will be allocated numbers. All new properties on existing streets will be numbered unless the existing properties on that street all have official dwelling names and no numbers, or in the exceptional circumstances outlined under the section "Guidelines for numbering buildings"

When numbering is complete the Council will contact all the relevant bodies.

## Procedure for individual requests for Address Changes

If the property has a house number, it will **not** normally be possible to replace the number with a name. In cases of dispute the Executive Director - Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory & Housing Services in conjunction with the Head of Business Transformation will decide. These will only be considered where it can be shown that the current numbering system causes delivery problems or emergency response issues, evidence of this will be obtained via the records of the body making the complaint. Also, if more than one property is affected then the agreement of all owners inconvenienced will have to be obtained if a global change is required.

To request a change to an address, the owner must give us either by email to **llpgqueries@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk** or in writing, the following information:

- the existing property name, road name and postcode
- the proposed new property name
- a suitable plan showing the exact location of the property if the property is not easily identifiable from the existing address.
- a date from which the house name should be changed (if not immediate).

Requests can only be accepted from the owners of properties; tenants wishing to change a property name must seek the permission in writing of the owner and submit a copy of the authorisation letter to the Council.

We cannot formally change a property name where the property is in the process of being purchased, that is, until exchange of contracts, although we can give guidance on the acceptability of a chosen name before this.

A check will be made by the Council to ensure there is no other property in the location with the same or similar name. Royal Mail will then be asked for their opinion on the suitability of the chosen name in case it may cause delivery problems due to the similarity with other locally named properties. Royal Mail cannot guarantee mail delivery if their advice is ignored. In these situations, we will formally advise the applicant against the name and also contact those other affected properties. Owners / residents of affected properties may take legal action if they have delivery problems caused by such name changes that are contradictory to advice given.

Once all checks are satisfactorily complete the Council will change the name of the property and advise the relevant parties both internal and external and this will include Royal Mail, Ordnance Survey, and the emergency services, internally we will notify Council Tax, and as a minimum the Local Land and Property Gazetteer team.

Confirmation in writing or email, to the owner of the property, will show the new official registered address, along with a map extract where applicable.



## **Procedure to name / re-name an existing street**

All such requests should originate from a Councillor for the Ward concerned or, in the case of a Parish, the Parish Council,. The Parish Council / Councillors can only make such a request if they can demonstrate that the request is for a bona fide concern that is causing problems and also owners / residents of all the affected properties have been consulted and at least two thirds are in agreement. If an individual wishes to request a change they must obtain the consent of at least two thirds of the properties concerned to be in agreement and progress their action through either the Parish Council or Councillor for the Ward providing they give consent to act on their behalf.

Once raised by the Parish Council / Councillor and the request for change is accepted by the Council, we will confirm with Royal Mail that the new name is acceptable and seek final confirmation from the Executive Director - Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory & Housing Services in conjunction with the Head of Business Transformation.

All costs associated with providing and erecting name plates, except in exceptional circumstances, will be met by the Council, and once sited, the Council will maintain all necessary name plates.

There will be no charge to residents who wish to make a change to their existing address.

## **Who is responsible for delivery of Street Naming and Numbering?**

The Street Name and Numbering team, in consultation with Planning and Environmental Health Departments, the Council Tax & Non Domestic Rate Teams and Electoral Services.

## **Performance Monitoring**

The Street Name and Numbering team will pass all requests for **new street names** to the relevant Council officers as mentioned above, who will pass back their recommendations; the Council will normally complete the process within 30 days. If no recommendations or comments are received within the time period given then it will be deemed to be accepted and the next stage of notification will commence

All requests for property name changes will be dealt with in 10 working days.  
*Please note, it may take at least six months for name changes to take effect in the systems used by other companies and organisations.*

## **Policy Consultation**

This policy has been written by the Street Name and Numbering team in consultation with the Head of Business Transformation and has been discussed by the Corporate Management Team.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the GIS team within Business Development.

*[This team has control of the gazetteers and the SN&N function]*

## **Organisations we inform of new/changed addresses**

### External:

Valuation Office Agency  
Land Registry  
BT Newsites  
British Gas Transco etc  
Ambulance Service  
Power Distribution Services  
Hereford & Worcestershire Fire & Rescue Service  
Geographers A-Z Map Company  
West Mercia Constabulary  
West Midlands Constabulary  
Worcestershire County Council (Various departments)  
Severn Trent Water  
Ordnance Survey  
Royal Mail Delivery Office Manager –

### Internal:

Council Tax  
Planning  
Environmental Health  
Land Charges  
Electoral Registration

## **Contact Details**

### **Senior GIS Officer**

Redditch Borough Council  
Town Hall  
Walter Stranz Square  
Redditch  
B98 8AH

Tel: 01527 534003

### **GIS Support Officer**

Redditch Borough Council  
Town Hall  
Walter Stranz Square  
Redditch  
B98 8AH

Tel: 01527 545259

e-mail: [llpgqueries@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:llpgqueries@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

**Department of Transport Circular No Roads 3/93** [edited in part]  
Dated December 15<sup>th</sup> 1993, and issued by the Department of Transport

1. This Circular supersedes Circular Roads 35/77 but does not place any new burdens on local authorities. It updates the advice given in that Circular on design and installation of street name plates and reminds authorities of the need to maintain regular contact with the Royal Mail on new or revised naming and numbering proposals.
2. Councils are asked to ensure that consultation takes place with the appropriate Royal Mail Postcode Centre at an early stage when considering new street naming and building numbering schemes. This is to allow the Postal Services adequate time to comment before agreement is given to a scheme and enables the Council to make changes to the proposals in the light of any representations received.
3. It is important to both the Royal Mail and the Emergency Services to avoid giving streets similar names within the same locality. The close juxtaposition of similar names such as Park Road, Park Avenue and Park Gate Drive in the same area has proved to be a particular source of difficulty. A great variety of "999" calls are received each day and some callers can be vague in the details they give. Where names are duplicated it can be extremely difficult to pinpoint an exact location in order to enable an ambulance to attend in the time allowed.
4. All authorities are reminded of the continuing need to maintain a good standard of street name plates and property numbering schemes and to improve existing standards where necessary. Both are essential for the efficient functioning of the Postal and Emergency Services as well as for the convenience and safety of the general public. It should be remembered that street names should be legible by night as well as by day. Adherence to the standards set out can help to achieve the maximum advantage from the expenditure undertaken.
5. The illustration of particular designs [below] is not intended to preclude the use of others which might be more suitable for a particular locality, but authorities are strongly recommended to adopt approximately the same ratio of legend to background and to avoid unduly thin lettering in order to ensure legibility. Good colour contrast is also important and combinations which are likely to be a particular problem for those who are colour blind should be avoided. It is not suggested that existing plates of character and distinction should be replaced. The aim should be to promote a good standard of design.

This can be achieved by following the criteria set out.

6. Authorities are requested to keep the street name plates and building numbering schemes in their area under review and to ensure they are

of a good standard. Street name plates at the junctions with main traffic routes should be given the first priority.

7. The relevant powers for local authorities are contained in Sections 64 and 65 of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, Sections 17-19 of the Public Health Act 1925, and for London Boroughs Part II of the London Building Act (Amendments) Act 1939, as superseded by Section 43 of the London Government Act 1963 and paragraph 14 to Schedule 8 of the Local Government Act 1985.
8. Could you bring this circular to the attention of the Chief Surveyor or Engineer and the Chief Financial Officer to your authority.

### **Recommendations for the installation of street name plates**

9. Street name plates should be fixed as near as possible to street corners, so as to be easily readable by drivers as well as pedestrians. The name plate should normally be within 3 metres of the intersection of the kerb lines, but where this is not practicable this may be varied up to a maximum of 6 metres.
10. Street name plates should be mounted so that the lower edge of the plate is approximately 1 metre above ground level at sites where they are unlikely to be obscured by pedestrians or vehicles and at approximately 2.5 metres where obstruction is a problem. They should never be lower than 0.6 metres or higher than 3.6 metres.
11. Name plates should normally be fixed at each street corner. At minor cross-roads, particularly in residential areas, one plate on each side of the street positioned on the offside of traffic emerging from the road may be sufficient, except where the road name changes or it is thought that paragraph 8 would apply. At major cross-roads, name plates will be necessary on both sides of each arm.
12. At T-junctions a main street name plate should be placed directly opposite the traffic approaching from the side road.
13. Where the street name changes at a point other than a cross road both names should be displayed at the point of change and many local authorities have found it useful to include arrows to indicate clearly to which part of the street the names refer.
14. On straight lengths of road without intersections name plates should be repeated at reasonable intervals with priority given to such places as bus and railway stations and opposite entrances to well frequented sites such as car parks.

15. Where two streets branch off obliquely from a common junction with a third street, plates on fingerpost mountings can be useful, provided they do not obscure any traffic sign.
16. Where it might reasonably be expected, for example at intervals on long straight lengths of road or at intersections or T-junctions, many local authorities have found it useful to incorporate on the name plate information indicating the street numbers on either side of the intersection.
17. Whenever practical, street name plates should be mounted on walls, buildings or other boundary structures at the back of the footway. Post mounting or finger mounting should only be used where normal mounting does not make the plate conspicuous (e. g. where an important side road has a narrow entrance or in the exceptional circumstances mentioned in par. 7 above, or where it will frequently be obscured by pedestrian movement and cannot be mounted at the 2.5 metre height).
18. The name plates should be so fixed that there is a clear space of at least 300mm in every direction between them and any notices, advertisements or other printed or written matter. Where possible greater clearance should be provided. Nor should they be incorporated in other direction sign assemblies, but be kept distinct and mounted in as standardised a manner as possible. Care should be taken to keep the view of name plates free from obstruction by trees or other growth.
19. Where possible, name plates should be fixed so that they will be illuminated by light from street lamps, especially at important junctions, provided they remain visible to vehicles on the main carriageway.
20. Duplication of street names or nearly similar street names should be avoided within one postal area.

### **Recommendations for the design of street name plates**

21. Because street name plates are commonly viewed from an angle it is important that wide well-spaced lettering should be used.
22. Capital lettering should be used to avoid confusion with traffic signs, which generally employ lower case lettering
23. Figures (i)-(vi) illustrate suggested alphabets and designs. It should be noted that many serif alphabets do not perform well when used on reflectorised backgrounds. Authorities are recommended to employ "sans serif" lettering on reflectorised name plates. Figures (iii) and (iv) employ a "sans serif" Gill letter. Figures (v) and (vi) use the pre-1965 Revised Standard Transport Alphabet. Figure (vii) shows the Transport Heavy Alphabet which is in current use for black legends on traffic signs.

The relationship of the stroke thickness to the letter height is shown in brackets. (It should be not more than 1:7 and not less than 1:4 to ensure adequate legibility). Figure (v) illustrates a street name plate with a “No Through Road” sign (diagram 816.1 in the Traffic Signs and General Directions 1981 (same number in the 1994 TSRGD). This sign may be used with any street name plate to indicate a no through road to vehicular traffic.

24. A 100mm actual capital letter height of lettering is the recommended standard for both the standard Transport and Transport Heavy Alphabets. With other alphabets with broader letter forms, 90mm may be used to reduce the length of the plate. Where fixing space is very restricted the design shown in Figure (vi) with either the Standard Transport or Transport Heavy Alphabets at 75mm letter height is preferable to using a 100mm alphabet with compressed letters and spacing. A 150mm letter height maybe more appropriate on fast main roads.
25. Normally street name plates should have black lettering on a white background with a black border, as this gives the best contrast. Where coloured legends or backgrounds are used, a contrast ratio of at least 7:1 is required. The use of colour combinations with low contrast, for example bronze or brown lettering on green backgrounds, will result in poor legibility, especially under low pressure sodium lighting. The white background should be reflectorised wherever plates are likely to be viewed in the light from vehicle headlamps.
26. Only well known abbreviations should be used  
e. g. Ave., Cres., St., etc.
27. When streets have been re-named, the old name crossed out but clearly legible should remain for at least 1-2 years and then removed.
28. Only durable materials should be used for the construction of name plates and they should be maintained in a clean condition. Where a name plate is mounted on a specially provided post care should be taken to ensure that the appearance of the post and back of the plate are as pleasing and as unobtrusive as possible. Aircraft Grey No. 693 to BS381c has been found an unobtrusive colour in most environments when erecting traffic signs and can be applied to street name posts. Black may also be used if preferred.
29. Area colour coding by a background colour on the street name plate is not recommended. There is a loss of good contrast with many colour combinations. A coloured border may be a suitable alternative. Good contrast (a ratio of at least 1) is necessary if this is to be effective.
30. The chief aim of letter spacing is to give good legibility having regard to the letter form used. Spacing should be sufficient to prevent letters having a jumbled appearance when viewed from an oblique angle.



The apparent area between successive letters should be as uniform as possible and this is affected by the shape of individual letters. Vertical strokes found in B, D, E etc. are those which need to be furthest apart.; the curves in B, C, D, G etc. permit a slight decrease in spacing; right angled letters, E, F, L etc. and sloping ones, A, K, V etc. can be closer still; some combinations such as LT, LY and VA can almost overlap.

31. The minimum spacing between words should be some 40-50 per cent of the letter height, dependent on the form of the terminal letters. The end spaces to the border should not be less than would apply if the border were the vertical stroke of an adjacent word, except that some reduction in end spaces may be satisfactory if the line consists of a single word or is the longest line of several. Top and bottom borders should not be less than 50 per cent of the letter height, and spacing between the lines not less than 40 per cent of the letter height.
32. If district names are included on the name plate they should be shown in a smaller or reduced height of lettering. Figure (iv) gives an example. (see below)

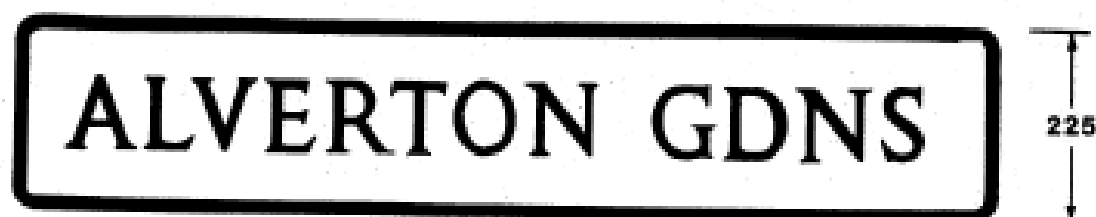


FIG. I KINDERSLEY — 90



FIG. II KINDERSLEY — 90



FIG. III GILL ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) — 90 & 50



FIG. IV GILL ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) — 90 & 50



FIG. V PRE-1965 REVISED STANDARD ( $\frac{1}{8}$ ) — 100 & 50



FIG. VI PRE-1965 REVISED STANDARD ( $\frac{1}{8}$ ) — 75 & 50



FIG. VII TRANSPORT HEAVY ( $\frac{1}{32}$ ) — 105 (related to 75 x-height)

all dimensions in millimetres